

REMARKS

Claims 17 and 26 are amended. Claims 17-32, as amended, remain in the application. No new matter is added by the amendments to the claims.

The Rejection:

In the Final Office Action dated September 17, 2007, the Examiner rejected Claims 17-32 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Conte (US 6,658,726). The Examiner stated that "Conte discloses in Fig. 1 8-11 and 22 of different cable-end processing stations and 22 being a double crimping unit; 5-6 provide cables and belt drives; 7 is the swiveling arm and gripper; Fig. 8 shows a turntable with a belt drive below 46 and 47; 14 is a cable transportation belt."

The Examiner stated that a recitation of the intended use of the claimed invention (the leading and trailing ends of the cables and the double crimp contacts) must result in a structural difference between the claimed invention and the prior art in order to patentably distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art. If the prior art structure is capable of performing the intended use, then it meets the claim.

The Examiner commented that "Col. 2, lines 28-31 states that the pivot head 7 which supplies the leading ends of the cables 3 and 4 to one or more of the processing stations 8 to 11 for the purpose of stripping them and then pressing a crimp contact thereon." According to the Examiner, further, any one point along the cable can be called a leading end of the cable and 1 mm from the one point along the cable can be called a trailing end of the cable. According to the Examiner, furthermore, a recitation of the intended use of the claimed invention (the leading and trailing ends of the cables and the double crimp contacts) must result in a structural difference between the claimed invention and the prior art in order to patentably distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art. If the prior art structure is capable of performing the intended use, then it meets the claim.

The Response:

The Examiner commented that "Col. 2, lines 28-31 states that the pivot head 7 which supplies the leading ends of the cables 3 and 4 to one or more of the processing stations 8 to 11

for the purpose of stripping them and then pressing a crimp contact thereon.” Applicants agree with the Examiner.

However, according to the Examiner, any one point along the cable can be called a leading end of the cable and 1 mm from the one point along the cable can be called a trailing end of the cable. That is not correct. Applicants’ Claims 17 and 26 recite a cable-length having a leading-end and a trailing-end. The end of the cable-length means that the cable-length does not continue beyond that point. This is the common definition of the word “end”. For example, *Merriam-Webster's Online Dictionary, 10th Edition*, defines “end” as: “1 a: the part of an area that lies at the boundary b (1): a point that marks the extent of something (2): the point where something ceases to exist <world without end> c: the extreme or last part lengthwise”. Thus, a cable-end cannot be any one point along a cable-length.

Attached is Fig. 1 from Conte that shows a cable deposit device 1 connected to an automatic cable processing unit 2 whereby cables 3, 4 that have been processed by the unit 2 may be deposited separately for the manufacture of double crimped cables 25 or two single conductors having different diameters (Col. 2, Lines 19-26). Two belt drives 5, 6 supply the two cables 3, 4 to a pivot head 7 that supplies the leading cable-end of each of two cables 3, 4 to one or more processing stations 8 to 11 for stripping and attaching a crimp contact (Col. 2, Lines 27-31). Note that the trailing cable-ends of the two cables 3, 4 have not yet even passed through the belt drive units 5 and 6.

After the processing, the leading cable-ends of the cables 3, 4 are ejected from the pivot head 7 into the cable deposit device 1 (Col. 2, Lines 32-34). A conveyor 14 receives and stretches out the entire cables 3, 4 in a region 15 (Col. 2, Lines 35-47). Thus, the pivot head 7 moves only the leading ends of the cables 3, 4 and releases the cables entirely after the crimp contacts have been installed on the leading cable-ends.

A separate pivot arm 21 with gripping units 19, 20 is positioned at the entry to the conveyor 14 to grip the now free trailing cable-ends of the cables 3, 4 and supply them to a stripping unit 42, a unit 43 for bringing the cable ends together and a double crimping unit 22. The pivot arm 21 moves only the rear or trailing cable-ends of the cables 3, 4.

The pivot head 7 is not capable of holding the trailing cable-ends of the cables 3, 4. As can be seen in Fig. 1, the cables 3 and 4 are guided through flexible tubes (the thicker lines between the drive units 5 and 6 and the pivot head 7). Not only are the trailing cable-ends not exposed prior to being ejected from the pivot head 7, but the flexible guide tubes prevent the pivot head from rotating to a position where the trailing cable-ends could be presented to the processing stations 8-11. Therefore, the prior art structure is not capable of performing the intended use.

Applicants amended independent Claims 17 and 26 to clarify that:

A. the cable-ends are a leading cable-end and a trailing cable-end at opposite extents of a cable-length to be processed; and

B. the gripper and the swiveling arm are a sole means for holding and moving respectively the leading and trailing cable-ends of the cable-length in position for cutting and stripping by said cutting and stripping station and for processing by said at least one cable-end processing station.

The Conte pivot head 7 is not the "sole means for holding and moving respectively the cable-ends". In Conte, the leading ends and the rear ends of the cables 3, 4 are held, moved and processed by separate pivoting and processing devices. As stated above, the Conte pivot head 7 supplies only the leading cable-end of each of the two cables 3, 4 to one or more processing stations 8 to 11 for stripping and attaching a crimp contact. After processing, the cables are ejected from the pivot head 7 to the cable deposit device 1. The pivot head 7 moves only the leading cable-ends of the cables and not the rear or trailing cable-ends. The Conte pivot arm 21 with the gripping units 19, 20 supplies only rear or trailing cable-ends of the cables 3, 4 to the stripping unit 42, the unit 43 for bringing the cable ends together and the double crimping unit 22. The pivot arm 21 moves only the rear or trailing cable-ends of the cables and not the leading cable-ends.

Thus, Conte does not show or suggest the invention recited in Applicants' Claims 17-32.

In view of the above arguments, Applicants believe that the claims of record now define patentable subject matter over the art of record. Accordingly, an early Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

U.S. Patent

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Sheet 1 of 6

US 6,658,726 B1

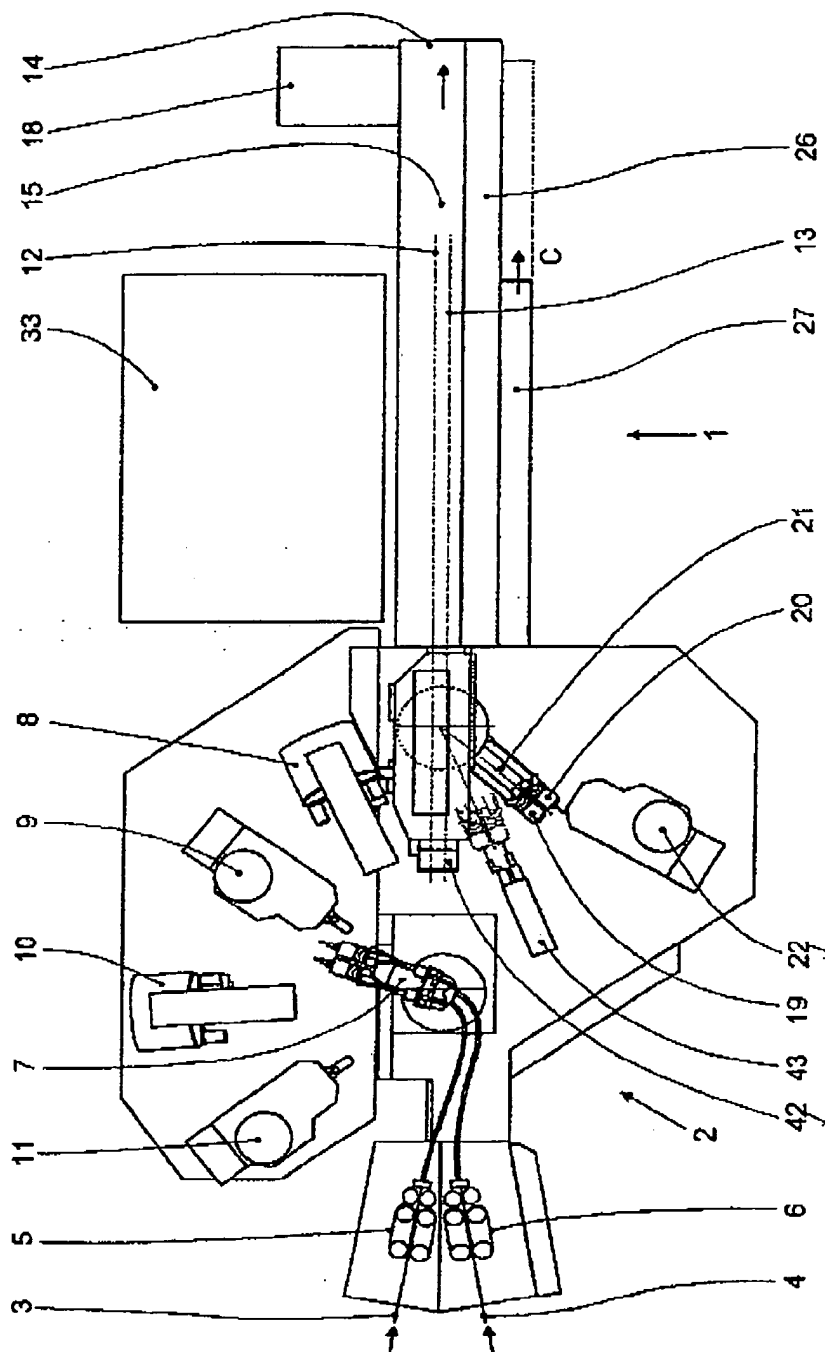


Fig. 1